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TURTLE FOUNDATION HAS SET UP PROTECTION CAMPS AT SEVERAL BEACHES OF BOAVISTA ISLAND



The Turtle Foundation has built camps on several of Boavista's beaches, where sea turtles come ashore to nest. The aim is to ensure the protection of the nesting females, which are threatened by hunting. Twelve soldiers, one sergeant and several volunteers give life to the project, which runs until October.

ONSITE REPORTER: "These are shocking images: They are the motive behind the construction of camps like this at the beaches, where turtle nesting is still threatened. Human hunting is the main enemy. Just here at "Boa Esperança" beach, more than 70 nesting females were killed in 2009. This year, since the Turtle Foundation has started with their nocturnal patrols, there has been no record of slaughter yet!"





JOANA HANCOCK: "Fortunately, since we set up the camp, the work done by the Turtle Foundation teams, the soldiers and the volunteers, has been excellent and we have recorded zero mortality at this beach."

Besides the camp at "Boa Esperança" beach, the Turtle Foundation has set up a camp in Lacacão, as well as a base in the village of "Fundo das Figueiras". From there, they patrol "Canto" beach and the entire northern area. There is also a camp planned for the area of "Curral Velho", overall an area protected by a total of 12 soldiers and one sergeant.



SOLDIER (MR. EDIVALDO CORREIA): "For me, it was the first time that I'm having direct contact with turtles and it's a great experience that I'm living, I'm enjoying it very much."

Critically important is also the support of a few volunteers who have joined the project. Mafalda Soeiro is about to finish her degree in Marine Biology in Portugal and decided to spend her vacation protecting sea turtles in Cape Verde. As coordinator of this camp, she also deals with the technical aspects of the work.

MAFALDA: "We usually count the turtle tracks as well as the nests. On the following day, at night, we accompany the turtles, never leaving it alone even when she has finished nesting. For us the end of the process is only when she returns to the sea."



The importance of addressing the issue of environmental awareness has not been forgotten by Turtle Foundation, which has joined the local NGO "Clube Ambiental da Boavista" (Environmental Club of Boavista) to implement the Project "Escola da Natureza" (school in nature). Children and youth from all over Boavista Island are getting the opportunity to see and learn in the field how the protection of the turtles is done.

ALEXANDRE MONTEIRO (from Clube Ambiental da Boavista): "Speaking about environmental issues, learning about turtles and the environment in general, and also family problems and awareness, are just some examples of activities we will provide in our camp."

Just in Boavista, 90% of Cape Verde's nesting activity occurs here: an annual average of 3,000 nesting females and 20,000 nests. The camps run until October.

